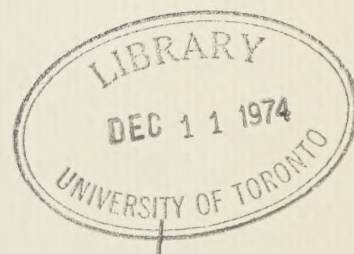


HALDIMAND NORFOLK STUDY • ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS  
**TOWARDS A NEW SYSTEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

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## TOWARDS A NEW SYSTEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Summary

This report examines various alternatives for the future of municipal government in the Haldimand-Norfolk area. Its purpose is to suggest the *approaches* to reform which seem to be most practical and to secure public reaction to them. It is not concerned with details, which can only be settled once a general concept of local government structure is decided on.

The report is based on the fundamental premise that municipal government has two purposes. One is to provide to the public certain kinds of services that are better handled locally than at the provincial level. The other, and perhaps even more important, purpose is to maintain grass-roots democracy as part of the total system of government.

The report considers:

1. The rapid and radical changes that the Haldimand-Norfolk area will experience;
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3. Local attitudes towards municipal government reform;
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From these are drawn certain basic principles on which the future system of municipal government in the area should be based.

1. Strength to function as an effective and efficient level of government.
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with the ability of local areas to have a degree of choice in the level of services which they wish to have.

5. Comprehensibility, clarity, and a structure in which responsibilities are well defined and easily identified.
6. As far as possible, consistency with historic identities and loyalties and with local wishes.
7. Maintenance of the essential role of municipal government as the vehicle of local democracy and the principal means whereby the public can participate in the process of government.

*It is considered that the present municipal system in the area must be radically changed because of its failure to conform with several of these principles.*

A number of alternatives were reviewed in preparing the report, but only three are considered practical.

1. A single "two-tier" regional government (similar to that of Regional Ottawa-Carleton, Niagara or York), covering substantially the present area included in the Counties of Haldimand and Norfolk but probably with some boundary adjustments.
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(Either of alternatives 2 and 3 could be combined with a system of local "community boards" with limited powers.)

Each alternative would have certain advantages and certain disadvantages.

Unification of the whole area as either a one-tier or a two-tier regional municipality would enable the central council to provide many services more effectively than can the existing local and county councils, but it is inconsistent with the requirement that there be an underlying "natural" or functional unity either now or in the future. A two-tier structure would help to overcome this problem, but would in turn present difficulties in defining suitable "lower-tier" units. On the other hand, dividing the whole area into a few unitary

HALLOWARD - WOLFLE STUDY  
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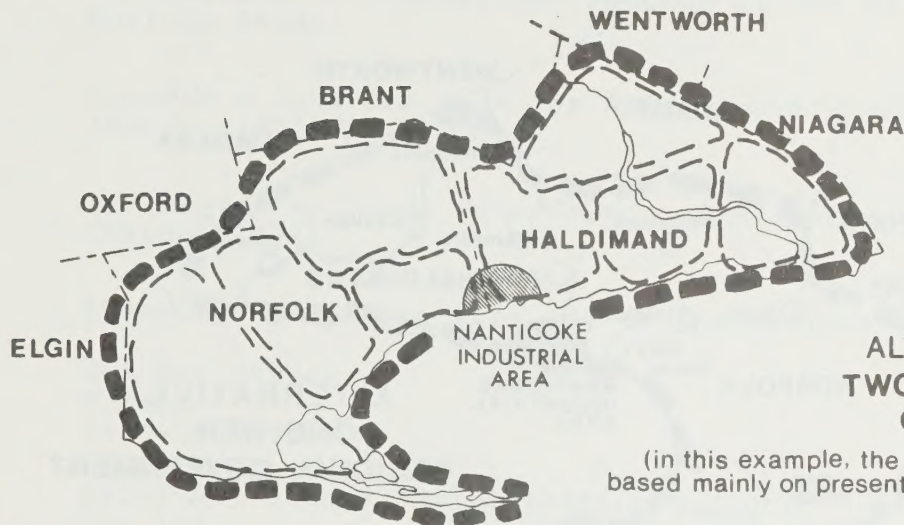
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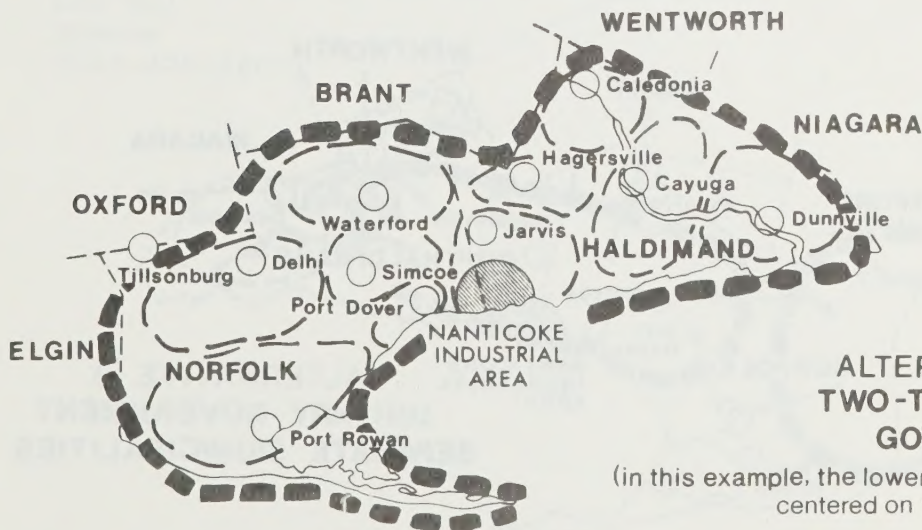
# HALDIMAND - NORFOLK STUDY

## APPROACHES TO MUNICIPAL REORGANIZATION



### ALTERNATIVE 1A TWO-TIER REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

(in this example, the lower or local units are based mainly on present municipal boundaries)



### ALTERNATIVE 1B TWO-TIER REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

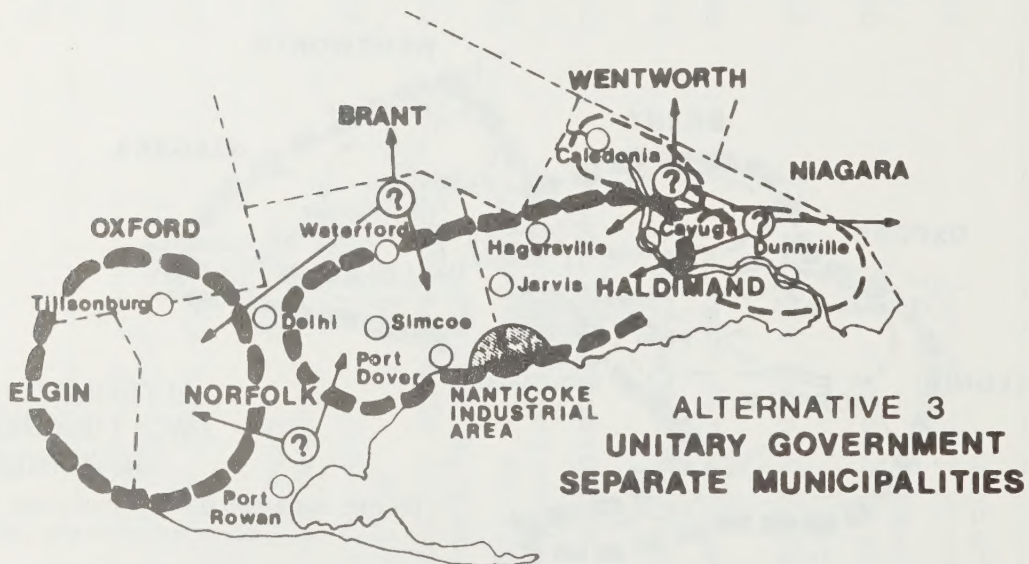
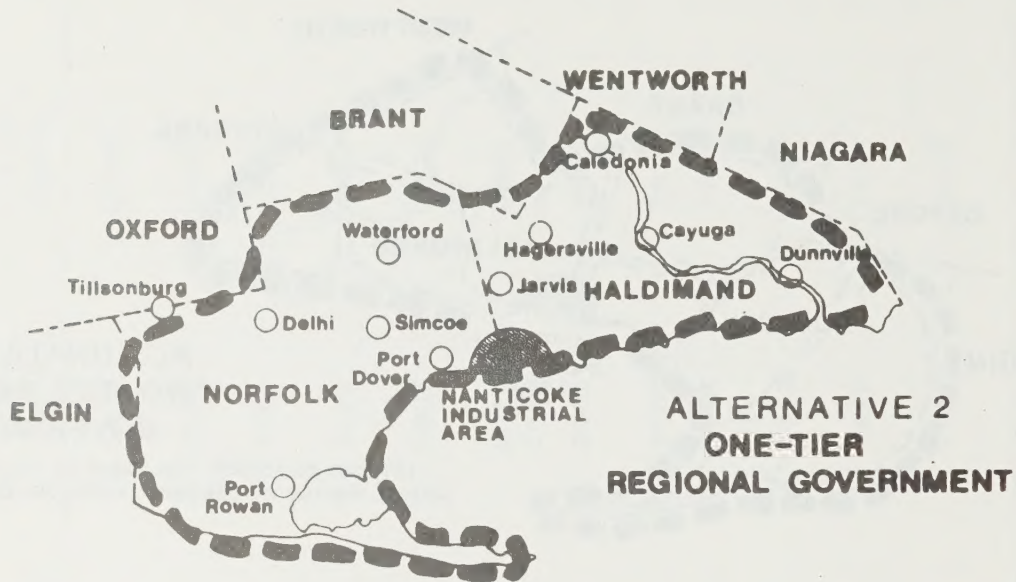
(in this example, the lower or local units are centered on towns and villages)

THESE MAPS ARE NOT INTENDED TO SUGGEST ACTUAL FUTURE BOUNDARIES. THEY ARE SCHEMATIC ILLUSTRATIONS OF APPROACHES TO REORGANIZATION.



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# HALDIMAND NORFOLK STUDY

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ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

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CAYUGA TEL. (416) 772-5096

[General publications]

[G-11]

January 18, 1972.

The Members of the Haldimand-Norfolk  
Joint Study Committee

The Citizens and Elected Representatives  
of the Study Area

Ladies and Gentlemen:

This report does not present *proposals* for a new system of municipal government. It suggests and discusses *alternative approaches* to municipal reform in the Haldimand-Norfolk area.

Its main purpose is to obtain your views on these alternatives. Only then will it be possible to proceed with definite and detailed recommendations to the Provincial Government.

Please note that your opinions, preferably in writing, should reach me *not later than April 14*. If you wish to submit your views directly, or to present a written statement in person, I would appreciate it if you would make arrangements to do so as early as possible, preferably by March 17.

Yours very truly,

N. H. Richardson,  
Study Director.

NHR/nm





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TOWARDS A NEW SYSTEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

*An Interim Report on Phase 2 (Local Government)  
of the Haldimand-Norfolk Study*

*Haldimand-Norfolk Study*

*January 1972*

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## Preface

In 1971, the Haldimand-Norfolk Study produced a report entitled *Restructuring Local Government: A Background Paper*. This was intended as a source of information about municipal government and about the Provincial Government's municipal reform programme in general.

The intention of the present report is to carry one stage further the information and ideas presented in the *Background Paper*. It considers the circumstances in which municipal government in Haldimand-Norfolk will have to operate in the future, reviews local attitudes towards municipal reform, and summarizes Provincial guidelines. On this basis it suggests certain principles which a municipal government system for the area ought to observe as far as possible. It concludes that the present system is not adequate in terms of these principles, and suggests three alternative general approaches to municipal reform which might be followed.

This report, though deliberately presented in a condensed form, is based on a careful examination of a number of complex factors which relate to local government in general and to the Haldimand-Norfolk area in particular. Much detail has been omitted in order to clarify the main considerations and arguments; a full discussion will be included in the final report of the Study.

*The main purpose of the report is to encourage the Haldimand-Norfolk Joint Study Committee, the municipal councils, other public bodies, and citizens of the Haldimand-Norfolk area to consider these alternatives (and others if they wish to do so) and to make their views known to the Director of the Haldimand-Norfolk Study.*

*All submissions should be received by the Study Director at either County Administration Building, or at 801 Bay Street, Toronto, not later than April 14, 1972. If a submission is to be made in person, arrangements should be made as early as possible, preferably by March 17.*

In the final stage of the Study, the Study Director will review the responses received and will then make definite and detailed recommendations for reform to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

The ultimate decisions as to the new municipal structure will, of course, rest with the Provincial Government.

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## 1. Introduction: The Role of Municipal Government

In a democratic society, government is not a sacred cow. A system of government -- at any level -- is no more than an institutional and legal device to enable the community to protect itself and to do those things for its members which they cannot effectively do as individuals. When new conditions or new expectations leave the governmental system unable to do its job properly, there should be no hesitation or false sentiment about changing it in whatever ways and to whatever extent may be necessary.

On the other hand, constant change is not practical because the system would have no chance to settle down and work smoothly. Tinkering with municipal government every few years in the attempt to help it keep pace with fast-changing conditions would be of doubtful value and perhaps positively harmful. This does not preclude progressive, step-by-step reorganization within a planned framework and with a definite ultimate goal. But it is a basic premise of this study that *piecemeal, patchwork change will not do*, at least in the Haldimand-Norfolk area. The scale and pace of industrial development and population growth, and all that they imply, will not permit it. Governmental needs must be related clearly and realistically to demographic, social, economic and physical facts.

In this respect Haldimand-Norfolk differs sharply from other parts of Ontario in which local government reviews have been undertaken. Most of these areas are growing, in some cases quite rapidly; but none faces the radical transformation in prospect for Haldimand-Norfolk. This difference in circumstances greatly diminishes (though it does not eliminate) the relative importance of the details of the existing municipal arrangements, and makes it necessary to start from a more fundamental position, with a consideration of the nature, purposes and functions of local government in Haldimand-Norfolk and how it will have to function in the future.

So one must start by asking: What is municipal government? Or perhaps better: *Why* is municipal government? Why should a provincial government transfer some of its own constitutional powers to locally elected councils?

In essence, the reasons are two.

First, there are practical considerations applying to the provision of certain kinds of service.<sup>1</sup> Physical and economic factors dictate that some services be provided on a local<sup>2</sup> basis; water supply and sewerage are good examples. Other services, such as firefighting or the development of neighbourhood parks, are likely to be provided more effectively at a local than at the provincial level.

The second, and arguably much the more important, justification for local government is its role as an essential component of a democratic system. This role can hardly be described better than it was by the Maud Commission,<sup>3</sup> substituting "provincial" for "national": "The importance of local government lies in the fact that it is the means by which people can provide services for themselves; can take an active and constructive part in the business of government; and can decide for themselves, within the limits of what national policies and local resources allow, what kind of services they want and what kind of environment they prefer."

## 2. Municipal Government in Haldimand-Norfolk: The Future Context

Present conditions and the prospects for the future in the Haldimand-Norfolk area have been fully discussed in earlier Haldimand-Norfolk Study reports (particularly, *Towards a Land Use Plan for Haldimand-Norfolk*, March 1970). The central fact is that large-scale industrial development is going to bring about a massive increase in population by the end of the century. From 83,000 people, 34,000 of them urban, the population will rise to over 300,000, of whom more than a quarter of a

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<sup>1</sup>In this report, "services", where not qualified, includes all services which are the responsibility of government or of public or quasi-public agencies.

<sup>2</sup>"Local" is used here simply to describe any scale substantially less than province-wide.

<sup>3</sup>*Report of the Royal Commission on Local Government in England*. H. M. Stationery Office, London, 1969; cmd. 4040. Para. 28.

million will be urban-dwellers. A placid farming region, much of which has remained fundamentally unchanged for the past century, is about to undergo rapid and radical transformation-economically, physically and demographically-in a matter of a few decades.

The system of municipal government in the area has also altered little since 1849, standing today at two counties, ten villages and towns ranging in population from 850 to 10,500, and eight townships ranging from 450 to 6,000. There are, as well, a large number of special-purpose boards and commissions each responsible for some specific function or functions falling within the general ambit of local government, using the term in its broadest sense. Whether this system has worked well in the past, or whether it works well now, is only of limited relevance. The important question is whether it can work well in the circumstances of the fairly near, and foreseeable, future.

But the viability and efficacy of any system of local government for a particular area is not a matter which can be considered only in relation to the internal circumstances of that area. It must be related also to its context, that is, to the external or general conditions in which it will have to operate. These can be considered under three headings, functional, policy and social.

As already noted, Haldimand-Norfolk has up to now been largely bypassed by industrial and urban growth. But such growth has nevertheless been taking place around it for many decades, to the point where the total urban population within thirty miles of the county boundaries is now about one and a half million. Together with Toronto, these urban areas make up what is often called the "industrial heartland" of Ontario, with which, in Canada, only the Montreal area compares in economic strength. Industrialization and urbanization will in effect bring Haldimand-Norfolk into this "heartland", and make it, quite probably, one of most important elements in the not-too-distant future.

While all this may seem rather remote from the immediate issue, the restructuring of local government in the two-county area must take account of the fact that Haldimand, Norfolk and neighbouring localities are going to be increasingly closely linked, physically and economically, with the various centres in a much wider area extending at least from London to Toronto and from Kitchener to Welland. Expressed in a slightly different way, the



Haldimand-Norfolk area will in the future be only part of a larger region, or perhaps a group of overlapping regions, which will have to be treated, for certain purposes at least, as functional entities, and therefore inevitably, as time goes on, to some extent as administrative entities.

Thus, the restructuring of local government in the Haldimand-Norfolk area must take account of two key facts.

One is that close functional relationships already exist, and will inevitably grow stronger, within an urban-industrial region which now includes much of central southwestern Ontario, and which will soon include the Haldimand-Norfolk area. The other is that while local government, administration and planning in this area, seen as a whole, are as yet far from fully integrated or even coordinated, one must assume that as time goes on such coordination and integration will of necessity increase. One cannot afford to ignore either fact in devising a system of local government for the Haldimand-Norfolk area suitable for the circumstances in which it will have to function, and able to exercise adequately the responsibilities it will hold. In the first place, the nature and scope of these responsibilities, and the ways in which they relate to those of the Provincial Government and other public agencies, are bound to be affected. Secondly, the areas of jurisdiction of local government ought to be compatible with the structure of broader regional agencies set up to meet the functional and administrative needs of central southwestern Ontario.

The third area to be considered as part of the future context can be dealt with more briefly, not because it is less important but because it is less tangible and its implications less predictable. We are living in a world of rapid, and in some ways radical, social and technological change. These changes will necessarily confront municipal government in the future with conditions, and probably with problems, with which it has not had to cope in the past. People's attitudes towards government (at all levels) and society, and their expectations of government, are changing swiftly and probably will continue to do so. These changes in attitudes and expectations are most obvious in the younger generation, but they are occurring among older people too--though they may not always realize it. In the Haldimand-Norfolk area such changes will be strengthened by the influx of newcomers whose ideas and



values may in many cases be significantly different from those of the "established" population. While it is difficult if not impossible to prescribe exactly how municipal government can prepare itself to deal with conditions which can at best be foreseen only uncertainly, it would unquestionably be folly to design a new system of local government on the assumption that the nature and emphasis of its responsibilities, and the social conditions in which they will be exercised, would be those to which it has traditionally been accustomed.

### 3. Local Attitudes

Another, and extremely important, set of considerations which local government reform must take into account consists of the present attitudes of the people directly involved. Our knowledge of these attitudes derives mainly from three sources: from our continuing cooperation, for more than two years, with the Haldimand-Norfolk Joint Study Committee, representing the two County Councils, and many personal conversations with individual members of the Committee; from a series of 21 public meetings held throughout the two counties (and also in Elgin, Oxford and Brant) during June and July of 1971; and from the Local Orientation and Identification Study (LOIS), carried out by consultants of the Haldimand-Norfolk Study.<sup>1</sup>

The interpretation and use of the information obtained is necessarily subject to two major qualifications.

First, the restructuring of local government is intended primarily to create an adequate political and administrative machinery for dealing with the conditions of the future rather than with those of the present -- most significantly, a fourfold increase in population and a radical change in physical, social and economic characteristics by the end of the century. This does not mean that the desires and attitudes of the existing population can or should be ignored; it does mean that they must be weighed against the needs and circumstances of the much larger, and significantly different,

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<sup>1</sup>Earl Berger Limited and David Jackson & Associates Limited, *Local Orientation and Identification Study*, November 1971 (Appendix).

population of the future both new and established.

Second, among 83,000 people one cannot expect to find complete uniformity of opinion. While it is clear that certain values and attitudes are prevalent, on many matters opinions vary greatly, sometimes diametrically. The account which follows is an attempt to convey briefly and impressionistically the general sense of public opinion where this could be identified, and also to indicate the areas in which there seems to be little or no consensus. A more rigorous statistical analysis of some of the issues discussed can be found in the full LOIS report.

To distil into a few central themes the diverse opinions of many people on a complex subject necessarily involves a great deal of selection, simplification and generalization. Yet it is possible, assuming the reader will recognize this and that he will realize that there are many exceptions to each statement made, to identify a few basic attitudes towards municipal government which are broadly typical of the people of Haldimand and Norfolk.

They place a high value on local control over local affairs and are anxious to retain and if possible extend it. They resent the "encroachment" of the Provincial Government on municipal "rights" and responsibilities. They are reluctant to recognize that this encroachment is the inevitable consequence of the inherent inadequacies of the traditional system of local government in coping with conditions vastly different from those which prevailed when the system was established.

Accepting that some changes may be needed in view of impending economic, physical and population growth, they tend to underrate the impact of the latter (particularly in view of the present uncertainty about Stelco's plans) and thus underestimate the need for the former.

Faced with the prospect that existing small units of municipal government will be increasingly unable to deal with the problems they will have to face, the majority opinion seems to favour minimal or adaptive change (through such devices as intermunicipal cooperation) in preference to comprehensive reorganization.

The ability of the present system of municipal government to do the job for which municipal government

ostensibly exists seems to be a matter of less concern than is the maintenance of the system more or less in its present form. (Indeed, the limits on this ability seem to be regarded as a sort of protection against increasing servicing costs and thus higher taxes.) Despite the general dislike of Provincial intervention, it appears that some people would prefer to maintain the form of the system substantially unchanged even at the price of a continuing shift of the reality of responsibility to the Province.

The notion of "big government" at the municipal level is widely viewed with mistrust associated with anticipated increases in cost, bureaucracy and red tape, and with the loss of effective local control and sensitivity to local needs and conditions. It is not generally considered as a practical way--in fact, probably the only feasible way--of maintaining and perhaps even increasing real municipal autonomy.

While these attitudes certainly reflect a degree of unwillingness to recognize the implications of changing circumstances, and a desire to cling to familiar institutions even when they have become seriously out of date, they are by no means entirely negative. They reflect also an awareness of the accessibility of the present municipal governments, their closeness to the "grass-roots", the opportunities they offer for widespread participation in public affairs. They reflect the value attached to historic local identities and an anxiety that they be preserved.

Nor do popular attitudes in fact run universally counter to substantial municipal reform. Despite the anxiety to maintain traditional identities and loyalties, it is recognized that in several parts of the Study Area there are common interests and functional relationships that cross municipal and even county boundaries. Growing differences in interests and orientation within the existing local political units are foreseen as industrial and urban areas begin to emerge in sharper contrast to their rural surroundings. The prospect of physical change contributes in another way to the acceptance of the need for firmer and united political action in at least one field: the control of industrial and urban growth and the protection of the physical environment.

Underlying much of the concern over municipal government reform is the question of money. While it would be



wrong to say that a guarantee against higher taxes would eliminate opposition, it would certainly reduce it substantially. Such reform is now quite widely seen, not as a means of *enabling* municipalities to provide a full range of local services and thus of maintaining real local autonomy and responsibility, but as a way of *compelling* new services to be provided at the cost of the local ratepayer -- an important difference in perspective. That comprehensive fiscal reorganization should accompany, if not precede, comprehensive local political reorganization is the unstated theme of much local opinion, generally expressed in terms of fears of substantial additions to the allegedly heavy load of property taxation.

#### 4. Provincial Guidelines

The Ontario Government's official policy for municipal government reform is presented in the White Paper *Design for Development, Phase Two* (1968). The criteria to be met by the newly formed "regional municipalities" are set out in the White Paper. It is, however, most important to note that these criteria are described as *guidelines* only, and experience since 1968 shows that they have in fact been treated as such and not used as ironclad rules. In summary, they are

1. "A sense of community identity".
2. A balance of interests within the area.
3. An adequate financial base.
4. A large enough size to allow economies of scale.
5. Public participation in determining the form of the new municipal unit.
6. A balance between "accessibility" and ability to provide services efficiently. (It was suggested that the minimum population for a regional municipality should be 150,000 and for a lower-tier unit (if any), 8,000.)
7. The "urban-centred" principle: *i.e.*, where feasible, an urban community and the rural area with which it is functionally linked should be included in a single regional municipality.



8. Boundaries that facilitate interregional cooperation.
9. Boundaries that are suitable for other administrative purposes, specifically those of the province and the Boards of Education.
10. Local circumstances to determine whether the new municipal unit should be one-tiered (unitary) or two-tiered.
11. In the case of two-tier regions, the same criteria should be used in designing both tiers.
12. In the case of two-tier regions, significant responsibilities to be given to the regional level: specifically, assessment (now a provincial responsibility), planning, arterial roads, health and welfare.
13. Transfer of many responsibilities from special-purpose bodies to municipal councils (regional or local).
14. Representation on regional councils to be based on population.
15. Regional councils may be directly or indirectly elected.

A set of guidelines is also given for determining whether the new unit should be unitary or two-tiered:

- a. Size.
- b. Population distribution.
- c. Distribution of fiscal resources.
- d. Physical and social geography.
- e. Local attitudes.

In arriving at a set of principles to guide the restructuring of local government in Haldimand-Norfolk, the principles and criteria used in the following reports were also examined:

- The Maud Report (para. 9).
- Manitoba Local Government Boundaries Commission,

*Provincial Plan for Local Government Units in the Greater Winnipeg Area, 1970 (pp. 45-46).*

- T.J. Plunkett, *Peel-Halton Local Government Review Report, 1966 (pp. 57-58).*

To a striking extent, these three reports and the Provincial White Paper have many of the same themes running through them, even though they relate to quite differing sets of circumstances.

##### 5. Local Government in Haldimand-Norfolk: Principles and Objectives

Based on all the foregoing, I suggest that any new system of municipal government for the Haldimand-Norfolk area should, taking into account the guidelines established by *Design for Development, Phase Two*, be based as far as possible on the following principles.

##### 1. STRENGTH TO FUNCTION AS AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT.

- \*1a. *Municipal government must have the financial and human resources, and the geographical scope, to provide a reasonable range of services effectively and efficiently, and to assume new responsibilities where appropriate. These might include some of those now exercised by the Province.*

Otherwise, "local democracy" is a sham, a facade behind which the real authority is exercised by the Province. The corollary to this principle is that municipal units which can provide few services, or can provide services only inadequately, should either cease to exist or should assume a new role not primarily concerned with services in the usual sense.

- 1b. *A new local government or governments should be capable of exercising a reasonable degree of strength in their dealings with the Provincial Government.*

Municipalities are and must remain the "creature of the province". But in the words of the Maud Commission, "it is only by the combination of local representative institutions with the central institutions of Parliament, Ministers and Departments, that

a genuine national democracy can be sustained." If the municipalities are too weak to deal effectively with Queen's Park, democracy will suffer. This has clear implications with respect to authority, financial strength, and professional and administrative expertise.

2. ABILITY TO MEET BOTH PRESENT AND FUTURE NEEDS, AND TO ADAPT TO RAPIDLY CHANGING CONDITIONS.

*\*2a. Any changes in the system of local government should take account both of the needs of the present and the immediate future, and of the needs of the more distant future as far as these can be foreseen.*

In the face of conditions changing as rapidly as they are likely to do in Haldimand-Norfolk, this is essential if the disruption of repeated piecemeal governmental adjustments and expedients is to be avoided. Three general approaches to this problem seem to be worth exploring:

- (i) to devise a radically new system of local government that can deal with both present and future conditions without substantial change;
- (ii) to make appropriate immediate adjustments in the present system in the context of a long-range plan for more sweeping change, and to continue the process as circumstances require;
- (iii) to devise a formula for "automatic" adjustment of the local government system to changing conditions.

*2b. Municipal government should be flexible and capable of dealing with rapid change. It should be able to accommodate to new tasks and new kinds of problems, including those arising from changes in both social conditions and technology.*

Ability to meet this requirement will depend heavily on the human resources, administration and attitudes of the individual municipality. It cannot be brought about by changing the form of municipal government; but the form of municipal government can help to provide the necessary conditions.

3. CONSISTENCY WITH THE PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE AREA ITSELF AND OF THE WIDER REGION OF WHICH IT IS A PART.

*3a. A new local government structure should be compatible with wider regional administrative structures and with the organization and reorganization of adjacent municipalities, and consistent with the role and functions of the Haldimand-Norfolk area in its geographical context.*

Haldimand-Norfolk will to an increasing extent have to fit into a broader framework both functionally and administratively. If new political boundaries are established, they should provide rational "building blocks" for a larger structure by following lines which are suitable also for administrative units of a wider geographical scale.

*\*3b. The geographical structure of municipal government should as far as possible reflect actual relationships and differences, physical, economic and social.*

Municipal boundaries should not, in other words, be purely arbitrary but should relate to some kind of identity or "community of interest". In practice this is a complex principle which involves such considerations as the definition of rational areas for planning and servicing; functional interrelationships (e.g., market or commuting areas); and avoiding competition for assessment within natural economic units. The principle also involves taking into account similarities of character and interest, while avoiding the danger of political domination by particular interest groups, and encouraging differences of interest to be resolved in the open political arena. In the Haldimand-Norfolk situation in particular, the emergence of new "natural entities" in the fairly near future must be allowed for as much as present circumstances.

4. EFFECTIVE COORDINATION OF MAJOR SERVICES, COUPLED WITH THE ABILITY OF LOCAL AREAS TO HAVE A DEGREE OF CHOICE IN THE LEVEL OF SERVICES WHICH THEY WISH TO HAVE.

*4a. Due to the extent to which the major services*



*are interrelated it is desirable that as many of of them as possible be administered by a single authority to ensure full coordination.*

This applies particularly to the services relating to the physical environment -- *e.g.*, planning, water supply, sewage disposal, parks, transportation -- but does not exclude "personal" services such as public health, welfare, police protection, hospitals and even education. All are to some extent interrelated, and to that extent (recognizing the difficulties involved), unification of responsibility would be advantageous.

*4b. Municipal government should be so structured as to permit different areas to have a degree of choice in the level of services with which they are supplied and for which they are required to pay.*

Certain services (*e.g.*, police protection, welfare, protection of public health) are general and should be provided and financed on a common basis throughout a municipality. The need and desire for other services (*e.g.*, sewers, sidewalks, local parks) will depend on local circumstances, and it seems reasonable that local residents should have some choice where these are concerned, within the limits imposed by requirements of public health and safety.

- \*5. THE SCALE OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE COMPREHENSIBLE AND ITS STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES AS CLEAR AS POSSIBLE TO THE CITIZEN. THE LOCUS OF RESPONSIBILITY SHOULD BE WELL DEFINED AND NOT DIFFUSED OR OBSCURED.

The purpose of local democracy is largely defeated if the "man in the street" cannot understand how his municipal government works or who is responsible for what, or encounters such diffusion of responsibility that he cannot get his problems dealt with straightforwardly and expeditiously. The greatest possible degree of clarity and simplicity is the ideal to be aimed at.

6. THE REFORM OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT DEPART UNNECESSARILY FROM HISTORIC IDENTITIES, TRADITIONS AND LOYALTIES, AND SHOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PUBLIC AS FAR AS THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH PRACTICAL REQUIREMENTS.

This principle may raise special problems, as it could prove to be in direct conflict with some of the others. But government at any level is simply an instrument for serving public needs, and should be designed to do so efficiently and democratically; *this must be the governing consideration*. But it should also respect history, tradition and popular wishes where this can be accomplished without seriously impairing its effectiveness.

7. MAINTENANCE OF THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT AS THE VEHICLE OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND THE PRINCIPAL MEANS WHEREBY THE PUBLIC CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS OF GOVERNMENT.

*\*7a. Municipal government should be so structured as to be as accessible as possible to the citizen and as responsive as possible to particular local needs and circumstances.*

In this principle, together with no. 1a, lies the very essence of municipal government. If they are not maintained, municipal government loses any real validity and would better be abolished altogether. Just as it must be capable of efficiently providing enough important services for its citizens to be able to take it seriously as a significant level of government, so it must convey a sense of being within reach and capable of being influenced by citizen views and needs. It need hardly be said that this can be carried too far; no government should be too subject to the influence of individuals, small groups or particular interests (see 3b).

*7b. Municipal government should offer the greatest possible range of opportunities for public participation in the activities for which it is responsible.*

One of the virtues of the present municipal systems is that the larger number of councils, boards, commissions, etc. enable a great many people to play some part in public life and contribute to the running of community affairs, which is hardly possible

at the provincial or federal levels. This largely voluntary participation undoubtedly contributes to "community spirit" and can accomplish things that might not otherwise get done, as well as offering personal satisfaction to the individuals concerned. Unfortunately, it can also have serious disadvantages unless related to a system in which responsibility is clearly defined and effectively exercised by the elected municipal council. The key issue is therefore one of establishing the right relationship between responsibility, elective democracy and participation.

It will be obvious that these principles are by no means entirely compatible with each other. Any given system of local government will at best be able to achieve some sort of compromise which may perhaps be consistent with some of them but only partly so with others; one or two may have to be abandoned completely. Therefore, while it is difficult to arrange these principles in a clear order of priority, I have indicated with an asterisk (\*) those which I consider to be *indispensable* to good municipal government. In essence, these key principles reduce to one: *the ability to function both effectively and democratically as part of the total governmental system of Ontario.*

## 6. The Present System Evaluated

Since the whole case for further consideration of local government reform rests on the adequacy or otherwise of the existing system, and since its retention has a good many staunch defenders, it must be assessed particularly carefully in relation to these principles.

It has frequently been argued that the present system has worked well for a century and can continue to do so. This reflects more sentiment than realism. The fact is that -- although it may not always be readily apparent -- it is now virtually impossible for a small municipality to do its job really efficiently even if its own character has changed little for a century. The changes which have taken place in the world around it and in the nature of its responsibilities and the expectations of its residents make it incapable of doing so. To take perhaps the most obvious and simple example, it cannot take advantage of "economies of

scale" -- the ability to make efficient use of expensive machinery, sophisticated management techniques and technology, and full-time specialized staff. As a result, the last few decades have seen the Provincial Government continually assuming either direct authority, or administrative control, or partial financial responsibility, for functions that used to be considered purely local concerns. On the other hand there has been a parallel movement towards intermunicipal cooperation through, for example, Boards of Health and Joint Planning Boards. It is quite clear that even now no municipality is or can be "an island entire unto itself". It is equally clear that in the face of rapid growth and change the ability of the present municipal structure to cope with the demands which will be placed upon it will continue to diminish.

It can be argued that the situation can continue to be met, as it has been in the past, by the transfer of responsibilities either to the Provincial or to inter-municipal bodies, and that this is an adequate solution to the problem of "accommodating to future conditions". *But each step in this direction would further diminish the claim of the individual municipality to be a valid and useful unit of government. It would in fact merely demonstrate its lack of "the resources and scale to provide a significant range of services" by itself.*

As to the extent to which municipal boundaries correspond with functional and/or natural geographical units, the geographical boundaries of many municipalities seem to be entirely arbitrary, dividing areas without real differences in physical or economic character and belonging to the same areas of urban influence (*e.g.*, for shopping and commuting). It is, indeed, easier to pick out the few boundaries that are *not* entirely arbitrary than to attempt to identify all those that are; for example, the Haldimand-Norfolk county line and the corresponding township boundaries, which divide areas of two distinct soil types; the northern boundary of Haldimand, which corresponds reasonably well with the limit of the Grand River basin; the Grand River itself where it forms a municipal boundary; and in general the boundaries of the towns and villages, if the urbanized area itself is the criterion used.

The clarity and comprehensibility of the present municipal system to the citizen is not an altogether clear-cut issue. In principle the system seems fairly



simple: a number of local municipalities individually hold most local government responsibilities, apart from a few which are exercised collectively through the county councils. In practice it is much more complex. In the first place, most municipal functions are subject to some form of oversight by the Provincial Government, which thus in fact shares the responsibility. In the second place, many functions (*e.g.*, public health, conservation, planning) are carried out on some sort of joint basis. In the third place, education is partly financed by the municipalities but it is not under their jurisdiction. And finally, many municipal responsibilities are exercised through special-purpose boards and commissions, (*e.g.*, public utilities commissions, park boards, etc.). This fourth area of complexity could be partly eliminated if the municipalities chose to do so; the other three are inherent in the present system and weaken the authority of the elected council. Thus, clarity and comprehensibility can be claimed only to the extent that the citizens are *accustomed* to the present arrangements; *objectively* it is certainly not a characteristic of the system.

On the other hand, the existing system can claim undeniable virtues with respect to accessibility and responsiveness, and certainly this is not to be underrated. But even here one must enter a reservation, for this particular virtue may in some cases be carried too far -- the small municipal council or its agents, with a constituency perhaps only of a few hundred, may be too sensitive to special interests and personal pressures, to the detriment of the good of the community as a whole. There is evidence that this is not unknown. Admittedly it is also not unknown in much larger jurisdictions; but it is not unreasonable to suggest that the authorities responsible for a small area and a small population are particularly vulnerable.

In short, the 28 local municipalities of Haldimand-Norfolk are in general not in a position, independently of each other or of the aid and supervision of the Province, to function as fully effective units of government or to provide a desirable level or range of service to their citizens; and without reform their ability to do so will diminish rather than grow. In many cases their boundaries are arbitrary and lack any practical justification. Their responsibilities are diffused and unclear. The municipal government system as a whole is much more complex than is warranted by a total population smaller than that of St. Catharines.

This is not to say that the system has no virtues. It is very much government at the grass-roots level, close to immediate practical issues, highly accessible, and offering a great deal of opportunity for active participation by almost anyone who wishes to take advantage of it. It is also familiar and sanctified by history.

But from a strictly practical and unsentimental point of view the present system simply cannot be defended as a really functional, efficient part of the total structure of government in Ontario.

## 7. Some Alternatives Eliminated

Retention of the present system having been rejected as impractical, it becomes necessary first to decide on the best *approach* to its reform; it would be a serious mistake to try to work out the *details* of a new system before deciding what its basic form or concept ought to be. Once this is determined, there will be ample scope for adjustment in its detailed application. But at this point we are considering only the general approach to municipal reorganization.

Any concept which would involve the continued separation of the two counties along their present boundary must be rejected immediately as completely contrary to principle 3. Since the Nanticoke development area will inevitably become the "centre of gravity" for both counties, it would be quite unrealistic to contemplate a boundary which left half the "impact area" in one municipality and half in the other. This would make no sense either on planning or on fiscal grounds.

Another concept which cannot be considered seriously is that of dismembering the entire area piecemeal and attaching its various parts to existing (Niagara) or new regional municipalities formed from the surrounding counties. There is no obvious *prima facie* reason to believe that this would be the best solution, but in any case it can hardly be considered in the absence of a framework for the restructuring of municipal government in central southwestern Ontario as a whole. Although such a framework was suggested by the Smith Committee on Taxation, none has been adopted by the Provincial Government. This possibility therefore has

to be ignored.

Lastly, there is the possibility of creating a greatly enlarged regional municipality which would include substantial parts of Elgin and/or Oxford, Wentworth and Regional Niagara, and/or all or most of Brant. This deserves more serious consideration, but at least from the point of view of the Haldimand-Norfolk area there seems little to be said for it on close examination. It would not suit present needs and might well not meet future needs satisfactorily either. It would risk being too large and clumsy for flexibility. It would inevitably include areas differing widely in character and interests, and would be difficult or impossible to reconcile with historic local identities. It would almost inevitably be complex in structure and present great difficulties in terms of accessibility and responsiveness to the individual citizen. In short, I would regard it as an artificial and unwieldy creation which would have great difficulty in functioning as an effective unit of local government. Only clear evidence of wide public support for this concept would lead me to reconsider it as a practical course of action.

## 8. Some Alternatives Evaluated

The elimination of these approaches to municipal restructuring leaves, in my view, only three basic concepts which can be considered compatible with the stated principles: *(i) one two-tier regional municipality covering approximately the area of the two present counties; (ii) a one-tier regional municipality covering the same area; or (iii) consolidation into a small number of unitary (one-tier) municipalities.* (Both of alternatives (ii) and (iii) are subject to modification by the introduction of the "community board" device; this will be discussed below.)

### (i) Two-tier Regional Government.

This would mean applying to the Haldimand-Norfolk area some form of the system which seems to have become more or less the standard pattern for municipal reform in southern Ontario, first in the Toronto area and then in Ottawa-Carleton, Niagara, York and Muskoka. Hence it needs to be pointed out immediately that circumstances

in Haldimand-Norfolk are not directly comparable with those of any of the other five areas, so that it cannot be assumed that even if this is the best solution in the other areas it will necessarily be so in Haldimand-Norfolk.

However, let us consider some of the issues that would arise if this approach were adopted.

First, are the present boundaries of the two counties suitable for a new regional municipality?

There are really two questions here: a) is the area *in general terms* a rational unit for municipal government purposes, and b) if so, should the existing boundaries remain unchanged?

The answer to the former question is not by any means clear. Although brought together at least at the political level by the advent of the Nanticoke developments on their common border, the two counties show quite clear historical, economic and social differences, including differences in orientation to large urban centres. Generalizing a good deal, Norfolk looks to London and Brantford for "big city" services, and Haldimand to Hamilton. Where shared interests and characteristics cross county lines, they seem to link Haldimand and Norfolk with other counties at least as much as with each other--for example, western Norfolk with Elgin; northern Haldimand (Caledonia area) with Wentworth/Hamilton; eastern Haldimand with Niagara.

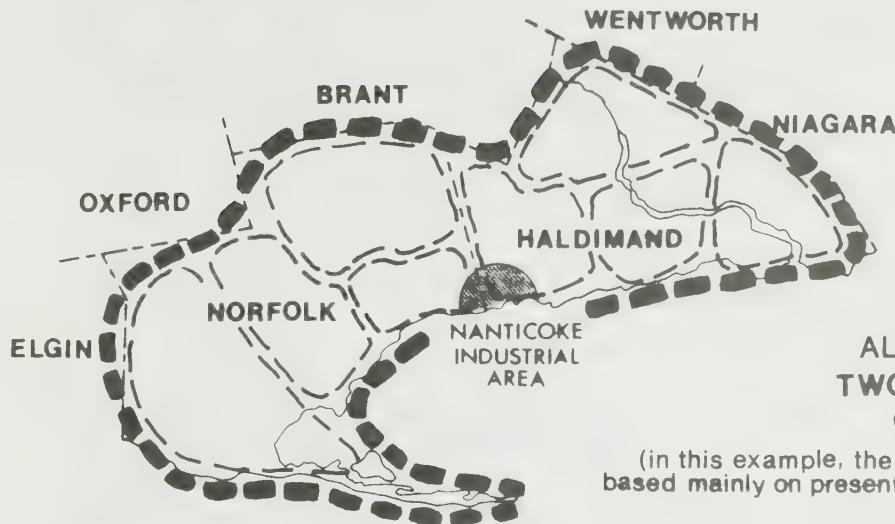
I do not wish to overstress the differences between the two counties, or the associations between them and their other neighbours, but it is important to recognize that at the moment Haldimand and Norfolk do not constitute in any sense a homogeneous or "natural" unit clearly set off from its surroundings. It is at least open to question whether there would be any reason at all for considering them as a practical single political entity but for the emergence of the Nanticoke complex as a common focus of concern and "centre of gravity", which of course creates an entirely new situation.

Nevertheless, it also has to be recognized that in the long run the Nanticoke industries and the urban growth that they will generate will almost certainly create a fresh set of "fracture lines". It is reasonable to suppose that the area within roughly twenty miles of Nanticoke will become increasingly industry/urban



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**ALTERNATIVE 1A**  
**TWO-TIER REGIONAL**  
**GOVERNMENT**

(in this example, the lower or local units are based mainly on present municipal boundaries)



**ALTERNATIVE 1B**  
**TWO-TIER REGIONAL**  
**GOVERNMENT**

(in this example, the lower or local units are centered on towns and villages)

**THESE MAPS ARE NOT INTENDED TO SUGGEST ACTUAL FUTURE BOUNDARIES. THEY ARE SCHEMATIC ILLUSTRATIONS OF APPROACHES TO REORGANIZATION.**

oriented, perhaps with a large "new town" as its focus, while western Norfolk in particular will for many years hardly be affected by new development at all, and then not by Nanticoke but by the proposed Dofasco development at Port Burwell. Meanwhile, the growth of Hamilton will increasingly affect northern Haldimand, perhaps eventually leading to a kind of Hamilton-Nanticoke "development axis" along Highway 6. Dunnville and the surrounding townships in eastern Haldimand may also tend to feel a decreasing sense of community of interest with the western part of the county as the character of the latter becomes increasingly dominated by industry and in-migrant urban population.

However, even if it should be determined that the two counties could constitute a single regional municipality questions about the suitability of the present outer boundaries would remain.

To give some examples: There is no economic, functional or geographical basis for the present Norfolk/Elgin county line, except that it corresponds very roughly with Otter Creek. The position of Tillsonburg, on the Norfolk/Oxford line, raises some obvious questions. The appropriateness of the present Norfolk/Brant line would need consideration in relation to the influence of Brantford, and that of the Haldimand/Wentworth line in relation to the influence of Hamilton on the one hand and the Nanticoke-based complex on the other.

The next main problem that would arise would be that of the "lower-tier" units. Even with the transfer of certain responsibilities to a regional council, several of the existing municipalities (in fact, probably most of them) would lack the size and resources to be suitable for retention as lower-tier units. The Haldimand-Norfolk Joint Study Committee has already considered possible amalgamations. In some cases these would present relatively little difficulty; in other cases the formation of rational lower-tier units would seem likely to involve the dismembering and reassembly of the existing municipalities into entirely new ones. Reassembly problems would affect Norfolk in particular, if one were to apply the principle of organizing the new lower-tier units around urban centres such as Delhi and Simcoe, which are located on present township boundaries.

But the most critical problem would be that of securing a reasonable balance in the future between urban and

rural areas. The situation to be accommodated politically within 25 years or so is one in which much the greater part of the area will still be rural but 80 percent or more of the population (something like a quarter of a million people) will be urban, roughly half the latter perhaps being concentrated in one new urban centre (the projected "new town"). Although in *present* circumstances it would be possible to devise a system of lower-tier municipalities in which none would be dominant, *this situation will inevitably change* fairly soon. As demonstrated by the Ottawa-Carleton experience, however, and to a somewhat lesser extent by that of Niagara, imbalance between urban and rural areas is not an impossible obstacle to a two-tier regional government; it is nevertheless a problem which would need careful consideration.

Some further problems also arise when the two-tier regional system is related to the principles, all in one way or another reflecting the fact that Haldimand-Norfolk is in many respects not a "natural" unit--physically, economically or functionally--and cannot become so altogether whatever may happen in the future. This in itself conflicts with principle 3b. A practical consequence is that the new entity would not be easily adaptable to planning and administration at the "large region" scale (principle 3a). The obvious illustration is that at *present* it is divided between two economic regions, Erie and Niagara (South Ontario). There are other considerations: Different parts of the area are oriented to different cities for "big city" services. This is likely to continue to some extent even when Haldimand-Norfolk has its own large town. Haldimand-Norfolk does not appear to be a suitable unit from a technical point of view for developing regional water supply and sewage systems. It is and will almost certainly remain divided into different conservation areas. The lack of a fundamental unity or homogeneity would probably also generate opposition to providing the regional council with the powers it should have, and hamper it in using them effectively (principles 1a and 4a). It could also lead to conflicts between the programmes and responsibilities of the two tiers.

In short, a two-tier regional government for substantially the area now included in the two counties would present a number of difficulties arising in one way or another from the fact that the area as a whole has no underlying functional unity and is in fact quite arbitrary from a practical point of view. The outer



boundaries would in any case certainly need examination and probably alteration to eliminate the most obvious irrationalities. In addition, the delineation of satisfactory lower-tier units would be quite difficult in certain cases.

## (ii) One-Tier Regional Government

The problem of defining suitable lower-tier units would be removed by outright consolidation into a one-tier regional municipality. Otherwise, the practical problems would be identical with those just discussed, except that they would probably tend to manifest themselves more sharply than in a "federal" system. The basic differences in character would remain, and problems of inequitable representation would be hard to avoid. This could lead to friction and ineffectiveness in a one-tier government, or eventually to the neglect of rural interests by an urban-dominated council, or both.

Some of the problems of one-tier government might be eliminated, or at least appreciably reduced, by the introduction of the "community board" concept.<sup>1</sup>

The community board is a recent development in municipal government theory. It is not a level of government, though it has similarities to the local improvement district and the police village. It is an elective body by means of which, in principle, the residents of a particular locality can obtain certain kinds of facilities or services (*e.g.*, street lighting or small parks) at their own expense, through the municipal council, and also express their views officially to the municipal council on any measure (*e.g.*, a change in zoning) which directly affects their community. It therefore has the following advantages.

- (i) It introduces a degree of flexibility into municipal administration by enabling individual communities to obtain extra services if they are prepared to pay for them.

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<sup>1</sup>There is no standard term for this relatively new concept in local government. "Community board" will be used here to make clear the difference from a local or regional municipal council.



- (ii) It gives representatives of such communities the opportunity and the authority to review (though not veto) municipal actions which concern their localities directly.
- (iii) It provides a general channel of communications between the individual citizen and what may appear to him to be a remote and inaccessible municipal council.
- (iv) It greatly broadens the opportunity for the citizen to participate in public affairs.

In the case of Haldimand-Norfolk, since the responsibilities of community boards would be extremely limited and their role would be mainly to provide an institutionalized means of expressing local interests, their areas of jurisdiction would allow of a good deal of flexibility and might well, in fact, be identical with the present municipalities, at least initially. (Changes would be needed as growth took place to prevent the "constituency" of any board becoming too large, or its point would be lost.)

### (iii) Unitary Municipalities

The last alternative to be discussed is that of dividing the area into a small number of separate unitary municipalities.

This approach, it must be recognized, would depart from the policy of creating two-tier regional municipalities which has in practice been followed so far by the Provincial Government in reorganizing municipal government in southern Ontario. But it is not excluded by the Government's policy statement of 1968 (pp.(8-9)) and it has in effect been adopted in the case of Thunder Bay, for example. I believe that it can be defended on the grounds that in central southwestern Ontario many programmes and services will necessarily have to be planned and administered for areas much greater in size than can reasonably be contemplated for any kind of municipal government unit. In practice, a tier of planning and administration, if not of representative government, is emerging between the provincial and municipal levels. This being so, I believe that it is by no means self-evident (not to put it more strongly) that it is desirable to complicate matters further by dividing municipal government itself into two levels.

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## APPROACHES TO MUNICIPAL REORGANIZATION



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I suggest that it is at least reasonable to consider as an alternative a series of unitary municipalities whose responsibilities are clear to their citizens and which can be grouped into administrative or special-purpose regions for particular purposes in respect to which they can work as effective partners of the Provincial Government. Of course, it must also be recognized that the possibility of a single municipality being included in different regional groupings for different purposes presents its own problems.

The central argument in favour of dividing the Haldimand-Norfolk area into a few unitary municipalities can be summed up very simply. The area as a whole, as already discussed, is not and probably will not be a "natural" unit for municipal government purposes. But if it were divided into areas with more homogeneity of character and interest, these areas would probably be too small in population, at least initially, to provide any justification at all for each or any of the new units to have two tiers of municipal government (though this could change in the future as the population grew). The most obvious objection to the scheme, in fact, is that it might be difficult or impossible to arrive at units which would be strong enough to function effectively even with only one tier of government, without being so large geographically as to retain internal conflicts of character and interest. To discuss the problem realistically, we need to consider how the approach might work in practice, having in mind the conditions which will soon begin to take shape.

The key fact is that there is going to emerge a sector centred roughly on Nanticoke whose population will become predominantly urban and increasingly oriented to the industrial area (even though most of its land area will remain agricultural). For discussion purposes this sector can be considered to include those parts of both counties within twenty miles or so of Nanticoke (we are not concerned at this point with precise boundaries). I will call it the "central sector". This would leave much of western and northwestern Norfolk still predominantly agriculture-based (mainly tobacco farming) and probably still oriented mainly towards Tillsonburg and/or Brantford; this is the "western sector". Northern Haldimand, around Caledonia (the "northern sector") would be strongly influenced by both Hamilton and the central sector. Finally, Dunnville would be the centre of an "eastern sector" comprising the town and the surrounding townships.

Would these four sectors be suitable for organization into unitary municipalities?

For some time to come the central sector would remain quite diverse in character, including parts of what are now separate counties, two quite distinct types of farming, and several urban places of varying size. A dominant focus and community of interest would come into existence only gradually. On the other hand, there are two obvious arguments in favour of constituting this sector as a single municipality. One is that it would ensure that the fiscal benefits of the large industrial tax base that will develop around Nanticoke would accrue to the area which will be directly affected and which, in particular, will have to house most of the increased population. The other is that in this area in particular, which will experience the brunt of rapid urban and industrial growth, strong and effective overall planning will be essential.

The western sector would be relatively homogeneous, but for most of it the natural centre (as demonstrated both by our own studies and those of the Oxford Area Local Government Study) is Tillsonburg, which is also the dominant urban centre of parts of Oxford and Elgin counties. Thus it would be necessary to consider whether municipal reorganization in this area should include those parts of the adjacent counties in addition to the western sector of Haldimand-Norfolk, to form a new municipal unit centred on Tillsonburg.

The northern sector by itself would not be strong enough to be viable as a municipality in relation to the principles discussed. Since it would be strongly influenced by both Hamilton and the central sector, it would be necessary to determine whether it should be included in the latter or in the proposed Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth.

The viability of the eastern sector as an effective unit of government would also be uncertain, although a case could be made for retaining a separate Dunnville-centred municipality, perhaps even including part of the present Regional Municipality of Niagara. However, it would be necessary to weigh this against incorporating the eastern sector either into the central sector or into Regional Niagara.

Another possibility would be to combine the northern and eastern sectors into a unitary municipality extend-



ing along both sides of the lower Grand River, though in terms of functional linkages and community of interest this does not seem to have a great deal to support it. In effect it would merely preserve the portion of Haldimand County excluded from the central sector as a political unit, with the river itself as the only common interest.

There is, of course, almost an infinite number of ways in which the Haldimand-Norfolk area could be arranged into a group of unitary municipalities. I do not suggest that the possibilities discussed are the only feasible ones. But the unitary approach is subject to two basic constraints which I have tried to illustrate. First, if municipal reorganization is to serve any really useful purpose there can be only a very small number of municipalities so that they can be strong enough to be effective units of government. Second, if this approach is to make sense they must in fact have some kind of actual community of character and interest. When these two constraints are taken into account it becomes clear that the range of practical possibilities is in fact very limited.

The point should be made, however, that difficulties in securing equality (measured in terms of size, population, taxable assessment or any other standard) among the different units should not in itself be regarded as a serious objection to this approach. Provided that each municipality is capable of functioning effectively as a unit of government, there is no need to assume that all must be more or less equal; such an assumption would militate against creating municipalities corresponding to areas of actual functional, social and economic community of interest.

The question of whether or not the community board concept should be introduced is a separate issue which should be resolved in relation to specific cases. For example, it would be highly desirable, if not essential, in the central sector if that were to be constituted a unitary municipality, to give expression to the various interests and communities involved; whereas if the eastern sector were to become a unitary municipality the need for community boards would be less certain because of the smaller size and greater cohesiveness of the area.

## 9. Concluding Observations

The purpose of this report is to discuss principles, problems and possibilities. I have reviewed the various considerations which bear upon the reform of local government in the Haldimand-Norfolk area, and have drawn from them certain principles which I believe should govern such reform. Some of these I consider so important that any new municipal system should be largely consistent with all of them. I have reviewed in relation to these principles all the possible concepts of municipal organization which seemed to me to be worth consideration, and have concluded that the final choice must be made from among three: a "two-tier" regional municipality; consolidation of essentially the whole area into one "one-tier" regional municipality, probably combined with a system of local community boards; or the creation of a very small number of unitary municipalities, either with or without community boards.

It must be said that each of the three alternatives has disadvantages that are more than trivial. No conceivable system of municipal government can be perfect, but in the Haldimand-Norfolk area we are faced with two fundamental difficulties. One is that the area is not a "natural" unit by most objective criteria. The other is that it is going to change very rapidly in its economic base, size and distribution of population, structure and other characteristics. Any one of the three alternatives involves problems in relation to one or both of these facts.

In essence, the problems are these:

In any system providing a central municipal government for the whole area, the central council would tend to be weakened and its effectiveness reduced by, on the one hand, the centrifugal pull of the different parts of the area with their widely differing character and interests, and on the other hand, by the functions and authority which would have to remain in the hands of the Provincial Government and which would not necessarily be administered in relation to areas corresponding to the boundaries of the regional municipality. This would be most undesirable in view of the imperative need for strong central planning, and the ability to make firm decisions in the face of rapid change.

On the other hand, dividing the area into separate units

would entail the danger that -- at least for some time -- one or more of these units would lack the strength to exercise municipal responsibilities adequately; though they would certainly be better able to do so than the present municipalities.

It is therefore appropriate to consider, first, *whether different concepts could be applied to different parts of the area*, and second, *whether the new system, whatever it is, could be introduced by stages*. As an example of the former, part of the area could become a two-tier regional municipality and the rest one or more unitary municipalities. As an example of the latter, if a two-tier system for the whole area were to be accepted as the desirable *ultimate* solution, amalgamation of the two counties and consolidation of existing towns, villages and townships into a smaller number of local municipalities might be brought about as an *interim* measure -- provided that the interim system was consistent with the ultimate goal.

These are the basic issues which need to be resolved before final recommendations can be laid before the Provincial Government.





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APPENDIX

*Summary of*

Local Orientation and Identification Study

*Earl Berger Limited*

*David Jackson & Associates Limited*

*(1971)*

*The information, recommendations and opinions in this Appendix are the responsibility of the consultants and are not necessarily supported by the Haldimand-Norfolk Study.*

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation 1      Regionalism should not be imposed, but evolve naturally out of the need for inter-municipal and inter-county cooperation. The final form of that regionalism should not be decided beforehand, but should be determined by the needs of the two counties and of the Province.
- Recommendation 2      If any readjustment of local government and county boundaries is required, consideration should be given to keeping towns together with their market areas, and especially with their areas of high orientation.
- Recommendation 3      Local government reorganization should begin with inter-municipal planning and other forms of local cooperation to deal with the major concerns of urbanization, industrialization and pollution.
- Recommendation 4      Serious consideration should be given to ways in which the powers of local government can be preserved and strengthened, taking into account the larger concerns of planning and development.
- Recommendation 5      Citizen participation and involvement in the processes of decision-making should be continued and expanded in an effective, practical manner.

## INTRODUCTION

Voices of the  
Citizen

We are greatly indebted to everyone who participated in LOIS. In all, approximately 1,500 people were interviewed in tape-recorded group meetings during the major part of the project. Meetings were held throughout Haldimand and Norfolk, and also in nearby areas outside the two counties. Report to the Citizens is a condensation of what people said.\* It is not a report by outsiders on what should be done; rather it is a summary of what you, the citizens, told us.

Purpose of LOIS

The purpose of LOIS is to assist the Haldimand-Norfolk Study in carrying out a review of local government organization and boundaries.

Specific  
Objectives

We have three major objectives:

1. to identify the market areas of the towns;
2. to identify the extent and strength of people's identification with their local communities, with their counties and with other areas;
3. to identify in general terms what aspects, if any, of local government the people would like changed.

## MARKET AREAS

What are  
'market areas'?

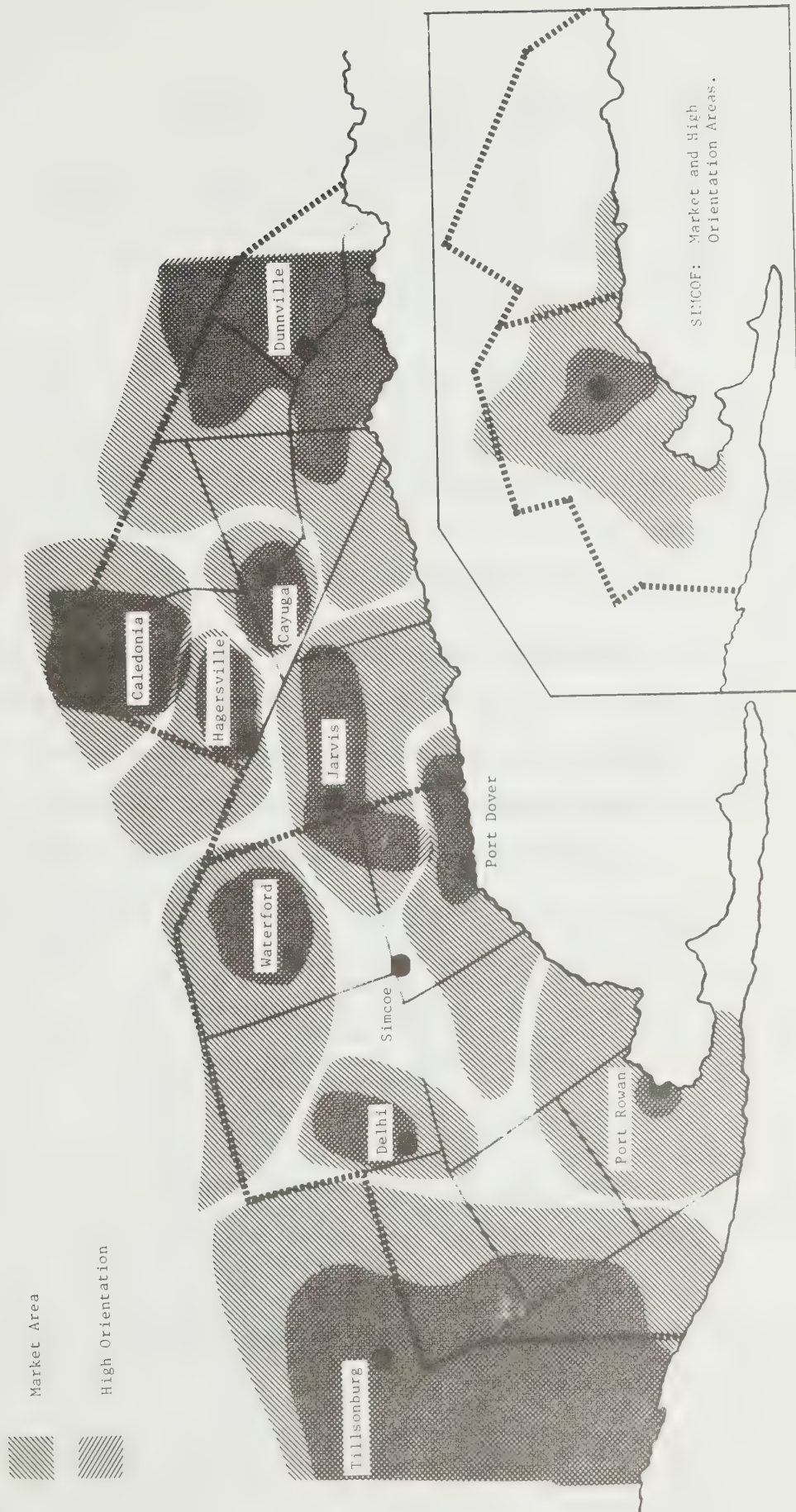
A town's market area is the area which the town serves. To find out the extent of each town's market area, we examined four factors:

\* A description of the full report is at the end of this report.



# HALDIMAND - NORFOLK MARKET AREAS

JUNE 1971



1. where people do their weekly shopping;
2. which local papers people buy;
3. where people go to visit more than once a week;
4. where people work.

The map shows the market area for each town.

#### High Orientation Areas

Within each market area, there is a small area, marked by darker shading on the map, which is highly oriented to that town. Judging by the high frequency by which people in that area use the town's services, the people have very close economic and social ties to that town.

#### Haldimand

In Haldimand, we see a pattern of separate market areas which are not closely tied to each other. The major economic and government activities are in different towns. Dunnville's market area extends westward through thinly populated areas almost to Cayuga. The limited extent of Cayuga's market area suggests its limited influence upon the county's economic and social structure. Jarvis takes in a broad area extending in all directions from the town, and is the only town in Haldimand which has a market area extending significantly over the county line.

#### Norfolk a Hierarchy

In Norfolk the pattern is quite different. Norfolk can be seen as a hierarchy with one major economic and government centre, Simcoe, (see map inset), and a number of smaller, vigorous centres around it and closely linked to it by

economic, social and government ties. When we remove Simcoe's effect (see map inset) we see that Waterford's area covers most of the northern part of the county, Port Dover and Port Rowan take in the southern part, and Tillsonburg covers the west.

#### Links Between the Two Counties

The two counties are not strongly linked together. Except for Jarvis, the market areas of most towns are contained within their own counties and do not cross county lines.

### LOCAL IDENTIFICATION

#### Strength of Local Identification

Citizens in both Haldimand and Norfolk identify very strongly with their local communities, and are deeply concerned to protect the quality of life and well-being of these communities. They identify much more strongly with their local communities than with their counties.

#### Protect Natural Environment

People, both urban and rural, expressed great concern for the protection and preservation of their natural surroundings and recreation areas. Townspeople want to preserve the friendly small-town atmosphere.

#### Urbanization Industrialization Pollution

These pose major threats to the natural environment and to the quality of life people enjoy in the towns and in the rural areas.

#### Importance of Local Government

People believe local government is the closest to the people, the most responsive to local needs, and of great importance to the well-being of their communities, the health of the

democratic society and the protection of individual liberties.

County Government  
is not  
Local Government

People expressed concern over the loss of local government powers. County councils are not regarded as local in the same sense as town and township councils; the shift of authority from the local to the county and the provincial level is disliked.

Dissatisfaction  
with County  
School Boards

People feel the county school boards are unrepresentative, administrators are not responsive to local needs, and costs and red tape have increased beyond reason. People believe both centralized assessment and county school boards were imposed against the wishes of the people and without regard for the consequences. People fear the same thing will happen with regional government.

Fear of Big  
Government as a  
Subversion of  
Democratic  
Practice

The Provincial Government is regarded not as the creation and servant of the citizens, but as an independent power which increases its authority at the expense of the citizens. This belief appears to be unrelated to any specific party, organization or political ideology. There is a strong feeling that the implementation and practices of centralized assessment, county boards of education and regional government - particularly the Niagara region - represent subversions of democratic practice.



Reduces  
Importance of  
the Individual

Regional government is not regarded as a means of restoring power to the local areas. Rather it is considered to be another way to deprive local governments of the few powers left to them, and to reduce even further the importance of the individual citizen.

#### ATTITUDES TO CHANGE

Opponents and  
Supporters  
in Agreement

There is no basic disagreement between the majority opposed to regional government and the small percentage in favour of it. Both see the same problems ahead, both have the same fears about the dangers of larger units of government, and both support increased power at the local level. But those who support regional government tend to believe it is the best compromise between the limitations of local government and the disadvantages of having the Province take over.

Boundary Changes

The great majority of respondents are opposed to any changes in the existing system of municipal and county boundaries.

Joining the  
Two Counties

Only a few respondents in Haldimand or Norfolk favour joining their county with any other county. But, if some type of union were required, the majority of respondents in both Haldimand and Norfolk would rather join with each other than with any of the other adjacent counties.

Support for  
General Change

There is substantial support in both counties for changes in the existing system of county and local government.

Pollution  
and Growth

Respondents want stronger government action to handle the problems arising out of increased industrialization, urbanization and pollution. They see this action stemming

Municipal  
Cooperation

from increased cooperation and collaboration amongst the local municipalities. They want increased powers for local

Stronger Local  
Government

government to handle local matters.

Differences  
Between the  
Two Counties

People in Norfolk are more in favour of general change, inter-municipal cooperation and area planning, and less opposed to boundary changes than those in Haldimand. In Norfolk loyalties are more divided than in Haldimand, and there is a gap between the urban residents, who are more open to change, and the rural residents who are more cautious. In Haldimand, opinion is generally united across all parts of the county. The people are clearer about what they want and do not want, and hold these opinions more strongly than people in Norfolk. There is also a stronger attachment to local communities in Haldimand than in Norfolk.

Regionalism

There is a general acceptance of the fact that some form of regionalism is inevitable and, to some extent, necessary if only to handle the problems of controlling pollution, industrialization and urbanization.

Critical  
Questions

The critical questions are not whether regional government will be established, but the process by which it is established

and the degree to which the citizens and their elected representatives are allowed to participate effectively in the decision making.

Period of  
Transition

Many respondents speak of the need for a period of transition, beginning with restructuring local and county government, and moving on to the necessary areas of cooperation between

Evolving  
Regionalism

the two governments. Regionalism should not be imposed, but evolve naturally out of the need for cooperation. The final form of that regionalism should not be decided beforehand, but should be determined by the needs of the two counties and of the Province.

THE LOIS REPORT

The full report, on which this summary is based, was completed and published in January, 1972, in three volumes. The report is based on three major sources of information. The first source is the 1,500 persons in the two counties and adjacent areas who attended group meetings and filled out questionnaires. The second source is made up of 100 persons, including all the municipal councillors in the two counties, who were interviewed early in the project, as well as a number of in-depth interviews with key persons in the two counties. The third source of information is the tape recordings of the group meetings.

Volume 3 of the report contains a summary of peoples' statements made at thirty of these meetings, and was invaluable in complementing the statistical data provided by the questionnaires.

Copies of the full report are available on loan (due to a limited number of copies) from the Haldimand-Norfolk Study.















